

S I R,

Since I had the Honour of receiving your last, there came to my hands several Curious Shells from you, with a piece of *English Agate*, and the Transactions of the Royal Society for the Month of *June* last, for which Favours I return my Humble Thanks. As to the Cockles of the *Caspian Sea*, and from the Mouth of *Wolga*, I have Advice from *Moscou*, that they are expected there this Winter: Meanwhile I herewith send you some *Snail-Shells*, taken out of the River *Faute*, not far from the City of *Moscou*. Our *Apothecaries* make use of them powdered, and probably for the same purpose as *Crabs-Eyes*. There are some others likewise which are found in the Rivers of *Moscou* and *Neglina*, and in the *Wolga*. Since you have been pleased to communicate to me an Inscription found at *Persepolis*, I thought it would be acceptable to send you the Draughts of part of the Ruins of the Stone-work of that Proud Palace, given me by the Person himself that drew them upon the place. I should be much satisfied had I any thing worthy of your Curiosity and the Publick, which you so often Oblige with your Discoveries, which justly merit mine and the Thanks of all that esteem them as much as myself, who am the Cherisher of your Friendship, and desirous to shew that I am,

S I R,

Your most Humble and Obedient Servant,

Amsterdam,
Jan. 1. 1694.

N. Witsen.

II. Dr. Gwithier's Discourse of Physiognomy. Communicated by Mr. Owen Lloyd, Secretary of the Philosophical Society at Dublin.

Index animi vultus, is a saying frequent in the Mouth of every Pedant, and every Fortune-telling Charlatan pretends to read a Man's Face; as the Astrologer does Heaven's.
All

All that soft have looked upon the Doctrine of *Physiognomy* as a great truth handed down by Infallible Antiquity, so never troubled themselves to devile any *Hypothesis* but what was more ridiculous than Judicial *Astrology* its Parent, or *Rosycrucian* lore; or to assign any Intelligible Natural Causes, for a Foundation of such an useful Knowledge, as might in some measure supply the defect of the so much wish'd Window of the Philosopher, in Man's Breast. This made most Men reject it as a Folly, and oppose one old saying by another, never making an estimate of a Man's Parts, or Temper on sight, unless the Fool, or Gallows were very legible. But upon strict Enquiry I find reason to conclude that a sober Naturalist may find much truth in that Art, which may be useful, and well solve all its *Phænomena* intelligibly, which has not been done by any one that I know; and if any of this learned Company have met with any, I desire they may here put a stop to this Discourse, that I may not offend by insipid Repetition.

Soft Wax cannot receive more numerous and various Impressions, than are imprinted on Man's Face by Objects moving his Affections, and not only the Objects themselves have this Power, but also the very Images, or *Idea's*: that is to say, any thing that puts the Animal Spirits into the same motion that the Object present did, will have the same Effect with the Object; to prove the first, let one observe a Man's Face looking on a Pitiful Object, then a Ridiculous, then a Strange; then on a Terrible or Dangerous Object, and so forth; for the second, that *Idea's* have the same Effect with Objects real, Dreams confirm too often; and *Virgil* can in a little time make one Face represent Shame, Fear, Love, Anger, Sorrow, &c.

The manner I conceive to be thus, the Animal Spirits moved in the Sensory by an Object, continue their motion to the Brain, whence the motion is propagated to this or that particular part of the Body as is most suitable to the design of its Creation, having first made an alteration in the Face by its Nerves, especially the *Pathetick*, and *Oculorum motorii*, actuating its many Muscles, as the Dial-plate to that stupendious piece of Clock-work, which shews what is to be expected next from the striking part: Not that I think the motion of the Spirits in the Sensory continued by the impression of the Object, all the way, as from a Finger to the Foot; I know it too weak, though

though the tenseness of the Nerves favour it: but I conceive it done in the *Medulla* of the Brain, where is the common stock of Spirits; as in an Organ, whose Pipes being uncovered, the Air rushes into them, but the Keys let go, are stopt again: Now if by repeated Acts or frequent entertaining of the Idea's of a favourite Passion or Vice, which Natural Temperament has hurry'd one to, or Custom dragg'd, the Face is so often put into that posture which attends such Acts, that the Animal Spirits find such patent passages into its Nerves, that it is sometimes unalterably set, (as the *Indian* Religious are, by long continuing in strange Postures in their *Pagods*,) but most commonly such a Habit is contracted, that it falls insensibly into that Posture, when some present Object does not obliterate that more Natural Impression by a new, or dissimulation hide it: Hence it is that we see great Drinkers with Eyes generally set towards the Nose, the aduent Muscles being often employed to let them see their loved Liquor in the Glass, in the time of drinking; which were therefore called *Bibitory*; Lascivious Persons are Remarkable for the *Oculorum mobilis perulantia*, as *Petrionius* calls it. From this also we may solve the *Quakers* expecting Face waiting the pretended Spirit, and the *Melancholy* Face of the *Sectaries*, the Studious Face of Men of great Application of Mind, Revengeful and Bloody Men like Executioners in the Act; and though Silence in a sort may a while pass for Wisdom, yet sooner or later Sir *Martin* peeps through the Disguise to undo all. A changeable Face I have observed to shew a changeable Mind. But I would by no means have what has been said understood as without exception, for I doubt not but sometimes there are found Men with great and virtuous Souls under unpromising outsides, as if Nature designed to shew, what *Seneca* said of his Friend *Claranus*, *Ut approbet virtutem omni loco nasci*. And a little after, *Claranus mibi videtur in exemplum editus, ut scire possemus non deformitate corporis fædari animum, sed pulchritudine animi corpus ornari*.